



**TESTIMONY
of
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of the
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT of PARKS and RECREATION
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY and HUMAN
RESOURCES of the
HOUSE COMMITTEE on GOVERNMENT REFORM
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On behalf of Director Ruth Coleman and California State Parks I wish to thank you Chairman Souder and members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to speak before you today. I am Theodore Jackson, Jr., speaking today on behalf of Ruth Coleman, the Director of the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Director Coleman was invited to speak before you today, but because of scheduling conflicts was unable to participate and has asked that I appear in her stead.

In my capacity as Deputy Director of Park Operations I am responsible for the planning, management, and staffing of the 278 units of the California State Park System. Comprising over 1.5 million acres, these parks preserve representative samples of California's incredibly diverse natural landscapes and habitats, significant historical and cultural legacy sites, and last year provided opportunities for outdoor recreation to nearly 81 million citizens of this state, our nation and the world.

Many of the units of California's State Park System are in close proximity or adjacent to public lands administered by agencies of the federal government as well as cities and counties of this state. Not surprisingly, in order to provide the best management practices at the most efficient cost we strive to work cooperatively with each of them. For example, we have cooperative agreements with the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management for the provision of mutual aid, joint recreational projects, and public safety. We lease over 100,000 acres from the Bureau of Reclamation, nearly 10,000 acres from the Bureau of Land Management and over 2000 acres from the U.S. Marine Corps and with lesser acreages from the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and special districts where we provide resource protection, management and recreational opportunities.

One of our cooperative ventures of which we are most proud is the General Agreement between ourselves and the National Park Service for "Increased Coordination and Efficiencies." This agreement partners seven National Parks, Seashore, Monument, Historic Park, and Recreation Areas with seventeen State Parks, Historic Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Areas. This agreement, which expires in the spring of 2009, is

but the most recent of three similar such agreements we and the National Park Service have shared since 1994. Prior to the adoption of the first agreement serious thought had been given by the State of California to the relinquishment of our three State Parks which were encompassed within the boundaries of Redwood National Park to the National Park Service. However, following an assessment by a joint National/State Park committee of twelve senior park professionals, there was recognition that there were significant potential advantages for statewide coordination to enable and invigorate park-to-park and agency-to agency programmatic cooperation to achieve joint operational improvements and cost savings. Following that group's recommendation the first agreement was entered into encompassing federal and state parks within the Congressionally-authorized boundaries of Redwood National Park, Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

A measure of the success of this venture is that our agreement has twice been extended since then, most recently in 2004, but has been expanded to include the lands of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Point Reyes National Seashore, Mojave National Preserve and twenty-three state parks which include portions of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail.

Over the last eleven years, both agencies have selected key personnel to make the partnerships succeed. These parks share facilities, staff, supplies and because resource, interpretive and law enforcement staff can cross boundaries, they offer the visiting public greater security, more efficient maintenance, more interpretation and coordinated recreation opportunities such as connecting trail systems.

In addition to the very tangible, day-to-day, on-the-ground results, another significant impact has been on the way each agency and park now thinks about the other as a professional partner that needs to be involved in how tasks are approached and how challenges can be met. Both staffs participate in professional training provided at California State Parks' William Penn Mott Training Center. This not only provides improved skills, but also fosters a team bond. Joint peace officer training in each cluster of parks in this state improves public safety through suppression of criminal activity, improved emergency medical response, and disaster response.

Throughout the parks covered by this agreement there is a heightened sense of shared missions, interests and stakes in outcomes. The partnerships have definitely increased the effectiveness of both agencies and have attracted respect from the public and interest from other states. Our partnership with the National Park Service has emerged as a national prototype. To illustrate the success of our agreement, I would like to offer a few examples out of literally hundreds which could be presented to you, which demonstrate how, by working together, we are able to accomplish more than we could individually. Clearly, you will see that the beneficiaries are not only the resources we are charged to protect, but the recreating public we serve.

REDWOOD NATIONAL and STATE PARKS

Now universally known as Redwood National and State Parks, the maintenance operations of both agencies are engaged in daily sharing of resources, communications, planning and scheduling, and develop joint annual work plans. Recent results of this cooperation which included natural resources staff have secured a long-term exemption from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to allow continuation of cyclic maintenance activities year-round in the heavily used visitor areas throughout Redwood National and State Parks. This has resulted in the continued health of several threatened and endangered species while providing well-maintained visitor use facilities

Due to their proximity California State Parks' staff provides custodial services for the visitor center, picnicking and comfort station facilities at the National Park Service Hiouchi Information Center and \$88,000 in waste removal fees. In addition, communication and alarm systems are shared by both agencies at visitor and administrative centers and equipment (i.e., pumper truck, garbage truck) which would otherwise be duplicated, are routinely shared. By combining collection and disposal of solid waste (including the recycling of paper, aluminum and glass at campgrounds and day use areas), 12.7 tons of generated materials have been recycled, thereby reducing solid waste brought to the landfill and saving \$20,000 each year. Through the organization of a licensed, joint agency, asbestos abatement team (only the second such team in the National Park Service) an abatement project at Glacier Bay National Park that resulted in a savings of over \$150,000 to the Department of Interior. California State Parks also provides the services of a state licensed civil engineer to the National Parks Service as well as facilitation services and, following significant events, necessary counseling services.

Through the efforts of California State Parks, State Prison workers provide grounds care for Crescent City, Del Norte County, Redwood National and State Parks and other nonprofit or public organizations. Prisoners now mow, trim and cleanup lawns and planting beds at park headquarters, the Crescent Beach Day Use Area, and Hiouchi Information Center, without regard to agency property resulting in significant savings to all involved agencies.

New Redwood National and State Park entrance, developed area and trail signs have been prepared jointly by staff of both agencies resulting in better communication and improved visitor services. Increased visitor safety has also resulted from radio, phone and computer system improvements by National Park Service staff which has saved California State Parks over \$200,000 in installation and annual maintenance costs. Current upgrades to these facilities, utilizing \$26,000 in California State Parks funds, are furthering this effort.

Much can be done to continue to improve and increase efficiencies. For instance we knew that the absence of a combined agency maintenance facility is a primary deterrent to additional cost savings through better management practices. Therefore we have been working together to complete a combined maintenance facility on State Park property which will further consolidate labor, equipment and material efficiencies that will continue to reduce operational costs. In this effort California State Parks is providing the National

Park Service sixteen acres of coastal property from Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park plus an additional \$1,000,000 million for the Aubell joint maintenance facility. The National Park Service will provide an additional \$9,000,000 for development.

GREATER SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA PARKS

Perhaps of principle interest to you in this geographic area are our combined efforts within Angel Island State Park. Acquired from the U.S. military in 1955, this nearly 750 acre island park offers world class vistas of San Francisco Bay, the Golden Gate Bridge, the skyline of the city of San Francisco, as well as the nearby Marin Headlands and Mount Tamalpais. Alive with history, three thousand year old Coast Miwok hunting and fishing sites can be found in close proximity to the largest collection of American Civil War era military buildings west of the Mississippi River. From 1910 to 1940, the island processed thousands of immigrants. During World War II, Japanese, and German prisoners of war were held on the island, which was also used as a processing center for American soldiers returning from the Pacific. During the Cold War of the '50s and '60s, the island was home to a Nike missile base. Within this park, the California Department of Parks and Recreation has pioneered landscape restoration, historic structure preservation, animal population control, and exotic plant species suppression methods which have been successfully employed by other park agencies throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and elsewhere. We welcome your visit tomorrow to this treasure of the California State Park System.

The Angel Island Immigration Station has a particularly eloquent story to tell of the experience of migrants to this nation from Pacific Rim countries. The story of their treatment, isolation, loneliness and ultimate success can best be told, as it has been at Ellis Island on the Atlantic Coast, through the station's restoration and interpretation. Through a productive partnership of the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and ourselves, major strides have been made to initiate necessary restoration of station buildings, curate artifacts, and provide important interpretation of the station's too little publicly know history. To sustain this effort, the State of California has budgeted \$400,000 of its general fund, \$3,000,000 from its Cultural and Historical Endowment, and \$15,000,000 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000. The recent Congressional passage of the Angel Island Immigration Station Restoration and Preservation Act of 2005 shows congressional leadership in protecting this important resource was actively supported by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. As you know, this act if signed by the President authorizes up to \$15,000,000 for station preservation. We eagerly await subsequent Congressional action which appropriates funds matching California's already substantial contribution to this national treasure's restoration and subsequent opening to the public.

California State Park's FamCamp Community Outreach program serves disadvantaged urban families with an opportunity to camp and visit parks through the loan of camping equipment and other training. The National Park Service has partnered with us in this effort by providing ferry service through their Blue and Gold Ferry contract for FamCamp groups departing from San Francisco.

Our cooperating agreement with the National Park Service has also facilitated the establishment of the "Island Hop" service with the Blue and Gold Ferry concessionaire provides the public with a single ticket trip to visit both Alcatraz and Angel Island. Beginning in 1998 this fare has served 17,000 to 26,000 Angel Island visitors annually.

Elsewhere in the San Francisco Bay Area, California State Parks is actively working with Muir Woods National Monument to improve their fire suppression system by providing land at the popular Alice Eastwood Group Campsite within Mount Tamalpais State Park for a 10,000 gallon tank (two hour supply) and delivery pipeline to the backcountry of the Monument. Other joint efforts are improvements to reduce unsafe roadside shoulder parking outside of the Monument which adversely impacts the natural resources of it and Mount Tamalpais State Park as well as improving park trail access to the public.

Both Point Reyes National Seashore and California State Parks are members of a variety of public/private groups seeking to improve watershed and fisheries resources of the Seashore, Samuel P. Taylor and Tomales Bay State Parks. As the watersheds of Lagunitas Creek and Tomales Bay are shared by national, state, local and private entities, it is only through such efforts that improvements in water quality and natural habitats resulting in restoration of coho and steelhead runs can occur.

The two mile long Dias Ridge Trail is equally shared by Mount Tamalpais State Park and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. This trail is a degraded remnant of an old ranch road that exceeds 25% grade with severe erosion problems and visitor safety hazards. The joint trail realignment and restoration project will establish a safe multi-use connection from the Panoramic Highway to State Route 1 at Muir Beach. At present, there is a draft proposal to facilitate the transfer of \$75,000 by the National Park Service to California State Parks to prepare and complete a California Environmental Quality Act and National Environmental Policy Act review of the entire joint project. Trail construction costs are estimated at approximately \$225,000. While the bulk of the construction costs are anticipated to come from federal funding sources, California State Parks anticipates contributing funding towards the restoration and rehabilitation efforts.

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS

Even before the signing of the original 1994 agreement between our two agencies, the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, the six California State Park System units and California's Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy had a history of working together to their mutual benefit. A recent example of this is the development of a weekend and holiday shuttle system that stops at State Parks, the National Recreation Area, Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy Parks, and county beaches. This service attracts new visitors to these parks and serves to reduce traffic congestion as well as pollution and provides access recreational opportunities each agency could not provide on their own.

For over thirty years we have sought to acquire the 588 acres of Historic King Gillette Ranch (SOKA property). This property is contiguous with Malibu Creek State Park and provides recreational and ecological connectivity with the National Recreation Area and other California State Park System Lands and Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy

properties. No one agency had the money to make this strategic acquisition but with \$7,000,000 from California State Parks and \$2,500,000 from the National Park Service for acquisition it has become a reality. This property will become a joint operational, interpretive and educational facility that will provide visitor services in the heart of the Santa Monica Mountains.

Under the leadership of the National Recreation Area we are participating in a mountain lion study in the Santa Monica Mountains. Four mountain lions have been fitted with radio collars and are being tracked through the Santa Monica Mountains. Information regarding movement, prey, hunting behavior, mating is being gathered which will help both agencies manage the preservation of this important, but increasingly rare in coastal southern California keystone species. Our efforts have been rewarded with the news this year that four kittens were born in Malibu Creek State Park.

A consolidated trail management plan is being prepared for the Santa Monica Mountains by the three partner agencies. The Santa Monica Mountains' trails are among the most popular in the nation but with the proximity of the urban Los Angeles area nearby, user conflicts and resource damage are growing. This interagency trail management plan draws on the strengths of each agency to provide a seamless system of trails with consistent policies and uses.

To provide for visitor and resource protection, a volunteer trail patrol program is being coordinated between the National Recreation Area, California State Parks and other agencies. There are nearly 100 volunteers that patrol on horseback, on foot and on mountain bicycles. There is a formal training program that is put on by the partner agencies to provide consistent and professional service on State Park, Park Service and Conservancy lands and trails.

CONCLUSION

Looking back over the eleven year history of our cooperating agreement with the National Park Service, I must conclude that strengths of partnership are not only its longevity but the overall equitability of the cooperation. There have been periods when, through available funding California State Parks has been able to take the lead on our joint efforts, such as in major property acquisitions. In other times various National Park partners have taken greater responsibility in arenas such as general and facilities planning. But taken as a whole, over the span of our formal cooperation, I believe that our contributions have been nearly equal. However, the most important result has been that by working together we have been able to leverage our individual contributions of money, staff, land and experience to provide more and better resource protection and public recreation benefits in a coordinated manner than we would have been able to if we had been working independently. California State Parks looks forward to many more years of working with our partner in California's State and National Parks.

Again I would like to thank Chairman Souder and members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to speak before you today and answer any questions you may have.